

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

COREY JOHNS, CHAIR

Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., at the BCPS Greenwood Administration, Building E – Room 114. In attendance were Corey Johns, Chair; Phil Davis, Vice Chair; and board members Danielle Bassett, Brooks Paternotte, Jon Marsalek, Isaac Manjoe, Pat Roddy, Chuck Munzert, Dana Jackson, and Desiree Mundell-Collins. Department staff included Bob Smith, Director; and Cortney Weinstock, Deputy Director.

Also in attendance: Jeffrey Budnitz, Lake Roland Nature Council; John Cox, Cockeysville Recreation Council; Kim Harrison, Overlea-Fullerton Recreation Council; Michael Hoyt, Colgate Recreation Council; Susan Parts, Office of Delegate Cathi Forbs; and Jarod Picone, Carroll Manor Recreation Council.

Call to Order:

Chair Corey Johns called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Isaac Manjoe motioned to approve the July meeting minutes; Chuck Munzert seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Director's Comments:

Director Bob Smith addressed all in attendance and discussed various topics including staff movement, hiring and realignment. In addition, Mr. Smith announced that the Permits Team is now active. Jon Marsalek asked about the notice to councils, regarding the Permit Team, stating that the Board was not looped in on this. He stated that he thinks it would be good for the Board to be aware/included on communication with the councils. As it relates to public policy, Mr. Smith stated that we will continue to add policies onto the website, in addition, we will continue adding to the capital projects webpage. Further, Mr. Smith reported that Baltimore County Recreation and Parks (BCRP) has obtained permission from the Office of Law (OOL) to post the Board's bylaws on the website.

The PAL Board Donation Acceptance went before County Council on September 16, and passed. Mr. Smith went on to mention upcoming meetings, events, trainings and projects, including: concussion training; MANO trainings regarding best practices for nonprofit organizations; Rosedale RAC Ribbon Cutting delayed with a new date to be determined; Meadow Creek Park Ribbon Cutting in late October; Hazelwood Skate Park Ribbon Cutting late October or November; upcoming festivals at Marshy Point Nature Center, Cromwell Valley Park and Oregon Ridge Nature Center, in addition to the Waterfront Festival at Rocky Point Park; BCRP will host Open House Listening Sessions scheduled for fall; and the cricket pitch at Cloverland Park is under design. Mr. Smith reported that some residents have concerns about the new disc golf course at Days Cove Park; the Department is in the process of addressing these concerns. In addition, Sparrows Point Park is slated to open in January.

As it relates to capital requests from the Board, Mr. Smith asked board members to relay these requests, via Mr. Johns, by November 1. Mr. Smith also reported on the meeting with OOL today, and stated that we will be scheduling individual meetings with nature councils to discuss MOUs. He asked the Board to establish a workgroup for recreation council MOUs, three weeks from now. He stated that we will have the first draft to the Board to discuss with the workgroup. On another note, Mr. Smith reported that the Office of Technology is looking at the Board's email request, and looking at other boards as well, as it relates to this request. Mr. Smith is waiting for an update.

Desiree Mundell-Collins asked about CAPRA Accreditation and when the Department would accept this. Mr. Smith stated that this would occur at the NRPA Annual Conference on October 7. Ms. Mundell-Collins commented that this is a big deal for the agency. Mr. Smith agreed and stated that NRPA is providing a press guide and he has been in touch with the Office of Communications, further stating that we cannot do anything until official approval is received. Ms. Mundell-Collins stated that she thinks this could be used as part of Reimagine Recreation and Parks, to help customers understand the goal and what we are moving towards. She stated that she thinks infusing this could be positive.

Mr. Johns asked about meeting minutes on the website. Lisa Winters explained that the County implemented a change to the content management system and various links were interrupted as a result. The issue has been reported. Mr. Smith asked members to let us know if they come across any dead links so we can address.

Mr. Marsalek asked for an update regarding the AED mapping. Mr. Smith reported that the Capital Team is mapping this in Park Finder; however, this will include only those that BCRP installed. Dana Jackson asked about the vendor the County used for the purchase of AEDs, stating that the councils may be interested in purchasing on their own. Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Marsalek asked for an update on the Belfast Road property. Mr. Smith shared that there is a request from residents to check on the second entrance; we are looking at traffic issues and impacts.

Board Member Activities:

Mr. Marsalek mentioned the Hereford MSRC shed issue, referencing former approval provided and now the school is stating that this was too long ago. In addition, Mr. Marsalek reported that he has received Hereford HSRC and MSRC complaints regarding parents drinking, in addition to complaints regarding the Inclement Weather Policy. He stated that he forwarded the drinking complaints to Amy Vagnoni, and the Board will discuss the concerns regarding the Inclement Weather Policy later in the meeting. Mr. Marsalek referenced a 1.1-acre property for sale next to Hereford HSRC. Mr. Smith replied, stating that this would not be usable to BCRP when it is not next to park property, and is already developed.

Ms. Mundell-Collins reported that she attended Reimagine Recreation and Parks meetings in District 1, and had a couple of meetings with financial group and Hereford Recreation Council. Mr. Munzert to provide an update later in this meeting. Ms. Mundell-Collins also referenced the sign on Halethorpe Community Center; Mr. Smith replied, stating that he flagged Property Management.

Pat Roddy reported that he attended the community meeting on disc golf and stated that he thinks with the input from the community, that it will proceed. He further discussed the comments and wants shared at the meeting. In addition, Mr. Roddy stated that he went by Fullerton Community Center and reported that the fire lane is unchanged and people are still parking there. He emphasized that this is very dangerous.

Brooks Paternotte reported that he has spent a lot of time with Mr. Johns this summer, communicating with councils regarding the MOU. In addition, he attended the Association of Nature Center Administrators Summit,

in Memphis, TN. Brief discussion ensued. Mr. Paternotte further stated that he learned of the Garden Club of MD scholarships and reported that he would share this information with folks.

Ms. Jackson stated that she has been fielding lots of calls/emails this summer, with councils trying to figure out grant paperwork and how to fill this out. She has been fielding calls to Mr. Johns as well, for assistance. She thinks this is still ongoing and would like to watch the recording of this meeting since she could not attend the meetings scheduled in the morning. Ms. Jackson referenced the opportunity a for 1:1 meeting, and asked for correspondence on how to get the SDAT, and CJIS background checks. Further discussion ensued. Mr. Johns asked if board members should direct councils to the County background check, until they get this figured out. The answer is yes.

Danielle Bassett reported that she had a great meeting with Halethorpe, regarding the Colored School 100-Year Celebration. She is working with the group and Otis Collins, and is very excited.

Mr. Munzert reported on the issue Loch Raven is having with a group taking over the field on Taylor Avenue. Mr. Roddy replied, stating that there was an issue last year with an adult league, not affiliated with the recreation council, playing when muddy and making the field unplayable. In addition, Mr. Munzert reported that Mount Carmel had an issue three weeks ago with a group using fields at night. They tore panels off the wall to turn lights on and police were called. Discussion ensued.

Chair's Report:

Mr. Johns reported that he has communicated a lot via email, and all are aware of what he has been doing. He instructed members to reach out to him with any questions.

Committee Reports:

Financial Review Committee: The committee referenced the ethics report about the investigation regarding Hereford and stated that there is nothing there in violation. Brief discussion ensued. In addition, the Board was asked to provide assistance with combining three existing councils. The committee will get back to the Board about this.

Governance Committee: Vice Chair Phil Davis reported that the committee met with Mr. Smith, with good, productive conversation. Once the MOUs are ahead of us, Mr. Davis stated that the Board will move in a different direction with regards to where we will move in terms of recertification.

Legislative Committee: Mr. Paternotte announced that the committee had nothing to report. Mr. Roddy stated that The Bruen decision was upheld and firearms can be banned from public parks.

Bylaws Committee: The committee reviewed Turner Station and Overlea-Fullerton bylaws, and sent to all board members. The committee recommends to approve these bylaws. Ms. Mundell-Collins had a few questions/concerns regarding Turner Station that she posed to the Board. Mr. Marsalek made a motion to approve the Turner Station bylaws; Mr. Johns stated that he thinks the Board should hold these bylaws as the council is operating under the 2016 bylaws, not the 2008 bylaws the Board had record of, and they need to rework the 2008 bylaws entirely. Mr. Johns motioned to table; Ms. Jackson seconded and all were in favor. Ms. Jackson said they may need to table all bylaw reviews until the MOU comes out; Mr. Johns stated that there is no MOU in place, further stating, that this has been pushed out. Board members voted on the Overlea-Fullerton bylaws. See item under "Action."

Old Business:

Insurance Grant Update: Mr. Johns stated that he has been sending a lot of emails, and expressing a lot of issues. He stated that the County is working on the issues; however, there is still a lot of worries and concerns, and councils that really need help.

New Business:

Inclement Weather Policy: Mr. Marsalek asked the Department to review the policy to see if it should be updated. He referenced more modern technology available, with regards to weather. Mr. Smith replied, stating that if councils have volunteers that are not in compliance with the policy, the councils should remove them. Mr. Marsalek urged the County to review the policy, stating that it is vague.

Recreation and Parks Capital Requests: Mr. Johns reiterated that these should be submitted to Mr. Smith by November 1; Mr. Johns asked board members to bring these items to the next board meeting for him to organize, and he encouraged board members to talk to the councils.

Comments By Individual Citizens:

Michael Hoyt, Vice President, Colgate Recreation Council stated that they were told by Baltimore County they had to change their address and he is questioning criteria for this. Mr. Smith replied, stating that communication will be disseminated prior to October 1, with clear direction on various items councils have received. Ms. Jackson stated that she compiled the information the County distributed and sent to all council presidents in her area. She stated that she would share this with Mr. Hoyt.

John Cox, President, Cockeysville Recreation Council addressed the Board regarding issues surrounding the Reimagining Recreation and Parks initiative, stating that the primary concern is directed to insurance. He discussed concerns and stated that the process and request is imposing incredible financial burden on the councils. He previously reached out to Mr. Smith with concerns, and referenced former communication he has from the County, stating that the councils are covered under the self-insured portion of the County. Mr. Cox further stated that he does not know why this needs to change. He is asking the Board to lobby BCRP and the County to remove this request. Mr. Smith stated that an insurance update will be coming out prior to October 1. Mr. Johns asked if insurance would be included in the MOU and Mr. Smith replied, stating that insurance conversation will be part of the MOU. Discussion ensued.

Jarod Picone, President, Carroll Manor Recreation Council is here before the Board to make the request regarding quick, easy access to approved/active permits in CivicRec. He thanked the Board for their assistance, further stating that the council's new bylaws have been very helpful. Brief discussion ensued.

Jeffrey Budnitz, Treasurer, Lake Roland Nature Council conveyed comment from nature councils as follows: the nature councils asked to have read into the minutes of the board meeting that as of today, it has been 85 days since the nature councils submitted their MOU comments to the County, an MOU that was sent to the nature councils in an incomplete state relative to several sections that the County had failed to complete/populate prior to sending the MOU to the nature councils, therefore MOU sections that the nature councils have yet to be able to comment on.

Action:

Mr. Johns motioned to table the Turner Station Recreation Council bylaws; Ms. Jackson seconded, and all were in favor.

Mr. Johns motioned to approve the Overlea-Fullerton bylaws; Mr. Marsalek seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Mr. Roddy further stated that he is in favor, but with the understanding that bylaws may need to be changed in conjunction with MOUs.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Davis moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Jackson seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters